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AUTHOR	Scribner, Jay Paredes; Madrone, Tara R.; Hager, Douglas
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ABSTRACT

This study uses the professional community as an organizing metaphor of schools and traces its relationship to principal leadership practices. It asks the following questions: (a) How does a principal create, foster, and support professional community? (b) How does leadership or existing organizational culture aid or impede attainment of school cultures that reflect the characteristics of professional community? (c) In what ways may the concept of professional community be further strengthened to enhance its usefulness to school leaders? The paper explores professional community and educational leadership in three interrelated ways: (1) it clarifies emerging concepts about, and relations between, leadership and professional communities within two urban high schools; (2) it critically juxtaposes these concepts and their relationship against recent literature; and (3) it uses a historical backdrop to determine where this exploration might go in the future. The moral here is that school metaphors (the way we "do" school) and how we structure the relationships and ideas of our lives are all interrelated. (Contains 42 references.) (DFR)

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The Role of Principals in Fostering Professional Community

Jay Paredes Scribner

Tara R. Madrone

Douglas Hager

University of Missouri-Columbia

Paper presented at the 1999 UCEA Annual Convention, Minneapolis, MN.

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Professional community as an organizing metaphor for schools has become increasingly popular recently as has the critical examination of said metaphor (e.g., Louis, Kruse, & Marks, 1996; Scribner, Cockrell, Cockrell, & Valentine, 1999). The purpose of this study is to further enhance conceptual clarity of professional community and its relationship to principal leadership practices. To that end, the purpose of this study is to answer the following questions:

- What is the role of the school principal in creating, fostering, and supporting professional community?
- What factors (e.g., leadership or existing organizational culture) facilitate or impede attainment of school cultures that reflect the characteristics of professional community?
- And, given our analysis, in what ways may the concept of professional community be further strengthened in ways that enhance its usefulness to school leaders?

The locus of exploration for this study is limited to two concepts: professional community and educational leadership. This exploration is carried out in three interrelated ways. First, it elucidates emerging concepts concerning, and relationships between, leadership and professional communities within two urban high schools; second, it critically juxtaposes said concepts and their relationship against recent literature; and third, it employs an historical backdrop to provide some perspective as to where this exploration might go in the future.

The import of this exploration is best presented by Sergiovanni (1994), who, in an address at the 1993 annual meeting of the America Educational Research Association, argued that the metaphors we use to represent school inform how we conceptualize and ultimately do school:

> The metaphor of choice (for school) is organization... And what goes on in them is understood as organizational behavior. It is from organizational theory and behavior that educational administration (including leadership) borrows its fundamental frames for thinking about how schools should be structured and coordinated, how compliance within them should be achieved, what leadership is, and how it works (Sergiovanni, 1994, p. 215 – parenthetical remarks added).

The import of metaphor has been argued to impact not just how we have organized and administered school, but how we have structured our lives in general (Morgan, 1997; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). As our metaphors have changed over time, then, the way we have structured our lives, including our relationships and ideas, likewise has changed. Arguably, then, as our

metaphors of school have shifted, so too has our way of doing school. Looking for the right way(s) to do school, then, means looking for the right metaphor(s).

Historical Backdrop

By the time the common school emerged in the 1800's, ontological models rooted in Cartesian metaphysics were becoming the primary lens through which the West viewed the world (Whitehead, 1925, 1933; Capra, 1996). The 17th century, deemed the "century of genius" (Whitehead, 1925), had produced a crescendo-like elevation of mathematics and science via Kepler, Galileo, Boyle, Newton, Spinoza, and Leibniz, among others. With Newton, the mechanization of nature was complete, as his three laws of motion and law of gravitation convinced us that the machine model of reality really was the case. This model became manifest in schooling in three primary ways. First, although the common school, as conceived of and rallied by Horace Mann, aimed at strengthening society through the education of all through student-centered pedagogy (Urban & Wagoner, 1996), there was a strong element of it that affirmed the momentum of an increasingly industrial and technological society, namely punctuality, respect for authority, and skills for factory work (Katz, 1968).

Second, with the advent of the twentieth century, progressive school reform shot to the forefront of national concerns as economic depression, increased migration from rural to urban locations, and compulsory attendance laws increased school enrollments astronomically (especially in urban settings). Administrative progressives brought us closer to the machine model of reality by embracing scientific management models emphasizing objectivity, efficiency, and effectiveness (Tyack, 1974).

The third way the machine model became manifest in schooling was in a paradigmatic shift in epistemology. The strides made by scientific inquiry was clearly evident in America by the 1890s. Objectivism and its practical manifestation in technology moved America and its thinkers further away from other ways of knowing. Scientific models of assessing and understanding began to be implemented in all areas, from business management and leadership structures to the curriculum in American schools (Nakamura & Smallwood, 1980). In 1910 a survey of the great American universities concluded that "the war between science and the classics was practically over," that science had triumphed, and that the promoters of a more eclectic approach to knowledge, such as what William James purported should be the case, had been defeated (Smith, 1990; James, 1985, 1975).

Although James ultimately lost the epistemological argument, others took up the challenge to the hegemony of objectivism and scientific management and their ontological suppositions; among these were Dewey as well as other pedagogical progressives (Tyack, 1974). Rather than the deposition of fact from teacher to student, Dewey (1916) argued that learning, and hence knowing, is not confined to facts, stagnant and segregated from experience, but is their use, inference, relationship, context, and suggestion to formulate an informed judgment and make a thoughtful response. This focus on *relationship* and *context* earmarked Dewey's "concept of continuity," which tied experiences and learning to both the past and the future, ultimately linking learning to community (Dewey, 1938, 1990). Hence, the inextricable commingling among the fact, the individual, and the community moved knowledge toward the phenomenology of socially constructed realities and away from the objective "stuff out there."

Although Dewey's constructivism proved to be no strong challenge to the importation and employment of scientific management into schools, the presence of community and socially constructed meaning continued to grow in the twentieth century as an alternative to the former. Indeed, the emergence of a community-type organization of persons vis-a-vis bureaucracy is clearly seen in Durkheim (1964) and Weber (1978), with the latter observing the transference of the qualities of industry (e.g., efficiency, speed, and effectiveness) to bureaucratic organizations (Morgan, 1997). What these sociologists noticed was how industry (and therefore the machine model) was influencing the organizing of people, especially the organizing of people by bureaucracies. The *Gemeinschaft/Gesellschaft* framework purported by Tonnies (1957) identified this dichotomy of human relationships in terms of identity and relationships, with Gemeinschaft demarcated by collective identity, kinship, and neighborhood living, and Gesellschaft by shared, yet individuated, identity, contractual relationships, and bureaucratic organizations. What these dichotomies primarily represent is a change in the way people relate to each other, as well as their identity in relation to each other.

Although the now modern convention of a dichotomous conception of community represents a verifiable bifurcation in the use of the term since the rise of the machine model, it tends to gloss over the copious and more subtle metaphorical uses it has recently enjoyed. A rigorous accounting of these assorted uses was delivered by Beck (1999), who posited a number of metaphorical uses, including ontological metaphors (e.g., family, village, music), psychological metaphors (e.g., responsibility, agency, meeting needs), structural metaphors (e.g.,

communitarian structures, smallness), and ethical metaphors (e.g., norms, values, beliefs), among others. As each of these has been used, to some degree, to represent a positive direction for school reform (Sergiovanni, 1994; Schein, 1992; Redding, 1998; Morgan, 1997; Beck, 1999), one that has recently emerged, and that clearly attends to the focus of this project, is community *qua* professional community.

Professional Community

An important aspect of education reform over the last 20 years has been the move from centralized and top-down structures of decision making and implementation to a process that is generated in (or at the least clearly attends to) the school building and the classroom (Clift, Veal, Holland, Johnson, & McCarthy, 1995; Lieberman, 1995, 1982). One route that has surfaced as a viable means to these ends has been teacher collaboration and teacher learning in the form of teacher professionalization (Darling-Hammond & Green, 1990; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996). Through the training and learning that obtains via teacher professionalization, it has been argued, teachers will find "the level of energy needed to reflect continually on and improve their practice for the benefit of authentic student achievement" (Louis, Kruse, and Marks, 1996, p. 179). In addition, if professional community can be developed in any school community (which, according to the argument, it can), educational inequity can be lessened. As the availability and distribution of effective teachers increases, so too will student learning, even in those areas (such as urban areas) that too often are described according to hardship and isolation than professionalism and community (Darling-Hammond & Green; Scribner, 1999).

Distinguishing professional community from other kinds of community, Louis et al. have explicated five elements that have emerged as being important (and arguably necessary) for school professional communities. These are the following:

- Shared norms and values that unify teacher roles and objectives;
- Focus on student learning that entails teacher discussions regarding methods and objectives of learning;
- Reflective dialogue that when performed as a group is aimed at reviewing and critiquing each other and the school;
- Deprivatization of practice that encourages sharing skills, insights, and uncertainties;
- Collaboration that builds expertise and broadens ways teachers meet students' needs.

Taken together, these elements often entail both the reculturing and restructuring of schools (Louis et al., 1996; Scribner, et al., 1999). Accordingly, attending to both the leadership and culture of the school is crucial (Bolman & Deal, 1997; Cockrell, Scribner, Cockrell, 1999; Fullan & Hargreaves, 1996; Louis et al.; Schein, 1992). Because cultures are demarcated by espoused values, behavioral norms, and rules, and most importantly by particular and covert underlying assumptions (Schein), understanding these and collectively facilitating their transformation to include "dedication to inquiry and innovation, and supportive leadership," can promote and elevate professional community (Louis et al., p. 191).

Design

The primary objective of this multiple site case study was to examine the role of principals in creating, fostering, and supporting professional communities in schools. Principals and teachers were the primary units of analysis and were embedded in two urban high schools in the same district. Using a modified grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis, we relied on interview data, while using observations and documents to corroborate and challenge themes emerging from interview data.

Site Selection

Sustained access and potential richness of experiences were the primary criteria for selecting the district and case schools. Similar to other urban school districts, Lakeland School District faces a declining economic base. The district serves over 100,000 students—one sixth of the city's population—in over 150 schools. The racial and ethnic make up of the school district is: 59% African American, 24% White, 11% Latino, 4% Asian American, and 1% Native American. Approximately 65% of the district's students qualify for the free lunch program.

Central High School has approximately 1655 students. Seventy-four percent of the students are African American, 10% White, 9% Asian, 5% Latino, and 1% Native American. Seventy-four percent of the students qualify for the free lunch program. The mobility rate is 34% and the annual dropout rate is 10%. North High School consists of approximately 1470 students. Fifty percent of the students are African American, 30% White, 15% Latino, 4% Asian, and 1% Native American. Fifty-six percent of the students qualify for the free lunch program. The school's student mobility rate is 19% and the annual dropout rate is 5%.

Participant and Event Selection

Given the exploratory and inductive nature of this study, participants were chosen using purposive and snowball sampling techniques (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). We theoretically sampled teachers according to reputation for excellence, content area focus, and years experience teaching. Excellent teachers were selected to maximize our understanding of how excellent teachers experience their work as individuals and as faculty members. Excellent teachers were first identified by their principal; then these teachers were asked to identify five peers believed to be excellent teachers until interviewee lists became redundant. Academic teachers were chosen because academic subjects are typically the focus of most measures of student achievement upon which most curriculum and school improvement reforms are based. Academic teachers consistently appearing on principal and peer lists were interviewed. Subsequent rounds of teacher interviews were guided by theoretical sampling based on other characteristics, such as career stage and content area (e.g., vocational and Title I areas), to ensure development of a meaningful substantive theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In addition, each school's principal was interviewed in-depth. Forty-five teachers and 2 school principals were interviewed.

Finally, we observed three staff development days at each school and three faculty meetings at each school. Formal professional development events were selected to gain insight into the nature and focus of planned activities at both school and district levels. In addition, we conducted approximately 10 observations of informal teacher work/learning sessions at each school. Most of these observations were either of teacher "family" meeting or similar types of team meetings.

Data Collection

To gain insight into the nature of faculty experiences, in-depth, semi-structured, and open-ended interviews were used as the dominant strategy to capture phenomena in teachers' own words (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Interviews were developed and continuously honed to ensure rich descriptions of issues relevant to the study (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992). Teacher interviews ranged from 30 minutes to two hours, while principals were interviewed for a total of approximately four hours. Interviews were audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Observations were conducted unobtrusively to understand "the research setting, its participants and their behavior" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 42).

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method, an inductive approach that "blends systematic data collection, coding, and analysis with theoretical sampling into a comprehensive research strategy" (Haworth & Conrad, 1997, p. 221). Glaser and Strauss (1967) discuss the constant comparative method in terms of four stages: (1) the comparison of incidents by categories; (2) the integration of categories; (3) the delimitation of the theory; and (4) the writing of the theory. Textual data were analyzed using open and axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). During open coding, data were "fractured" into provisional categories representing emerging sub-phenomena that shed light on the nature of teacher work. Properties (i.e., sub-categories) and their dimensions gave depth and meaning to the categories. Data were then "re-assembled" using axial coding techniques whereby categories and sub-categories were continuously compared to challenge and strengthen emerging categorical relationships. Finally, to facilitate analysis of interview data and field notes, QSR NUD*IST, a qualitative data analysis software package, was used to manage data throughout the study.

Findings

Central High School: Leadership for Professional Community

Central presents an interesting case when viewed through the lens of professional community. An inner city high school with a largely poor minority student population, Central was struggling to reverse a history of poor academic achievement among its students, and respond to demands for reform from both the state and district level. In the three years prior to the study the district had decentralized decision-making to the school level as site-based management (SBM) was implemented across the district in an attempt to gain greater input from teachers and other educational stakeholders in determining educational policies and practices. Further decentralization occurred with the inception of School-to-Work based "families" for ninth graders and select tenth graders.

While generally fitting the model of professional community described earlier, the school's successes in this regard also highlight the challenges that arise when school faculty are attempting to meet the most pressing needs of students while helping them excel academically. In many ways Central seemed headed toward developing a strong sense of professional community among its faculty. Significant efforts at deprivatizing practice were underway at Central specifically. Teachers in the School-to-Work program at Central received a common

hour of prep time, and teachers within all departments shared common office space rather than being isolated in their individual classrooms. Finally, the district began holding what are known as staff development days for school-wide planning to occur. The reforms at both the district and school level profoundly shaped the context of teacher work at Central, and provided the structural foundation from which the principal built her relationships with the faculty.

The Principal

Focus on student and teacher learning. With five years under her belt, the principal at Central had a clear understanding of what she meant by student learning, teacher learning, and the relationship between the two. Tying her notions of student learning to the school's mission, she defined student learning more broadly than academic achievement to also include practical and affective dimensions.

> Our primary goal is to make sure that our kids are prepared whether they want to go into the workplace, or a four-year college or a two-year college. We do that with the School-to-Work initiative. So what we try to do with our teaching and learning strategy is to relate what children are learning to the real world. Our focus this year is on increasing the GPA of students through the School-to-Work initiative....School-to-Work is the way we teach children.

As her comment suggests, Central's principal had taken a mandated district level reform initiative—School to Work—and worked it into the schools mission and her beliefs about student learning. In this case, School-to-Work offered the opportunity to broaden students' understanding about career choices, engage in goal setting activities, and develop career foci. Rather than functioning as just another program among the many offered at the school, School-to-Work at Central represented a break from the traditional model of educating inner city students. The principal embraced a philosophy of School-to-Work that served as her vision for the school as a place where the curriculum is structured to meet the unique needs of the student population while inspiring improved academic achievement.

The principal placed emphasis on meeting students' affective needs beyond the scope of traditional academic fare.

> For a school this size, an inner city school, safety is a big concern. So we focus a lot of attention on teaching kids ways to solve problems without having arguments or fights or

> things like that. We spend a lot of time teaching peer mediation. Really get kids to think critically about how they deal with other people.

From this principal's perspective professional development should meet a two-fold need. While all teachers should be involved in improving their practice to meet school-wide goals, they should also be allowed to decide for themselves what aspects of their practice they need to improve. More importantly, teachers should be supported in being active participants in both processes.

> I think there is personal professional development that may get at something specific that an individual needs. Whether it's academic or professional kinds of needs....Then I think there is the type of staff development that moves the school forward. For example, with School-to-Work being a new concept, I think everyone needs to be involved. All staff members need to be involved in any type of reform. I think that that is very important. It brings you up to date on what is going on and let's you see where you are as compared to what's happening in education.

While the impetus for School-to-Work came from the district level, the curricular change in conjunction with Central's adoption of SBM councils offered the principal the opportunity to reshape the context in which teacher learning occurs. The decentralization efforts at the district level allowed her greater freedom and flexibility in developing an inclusive style of leadership, which values and seeks teacher participation. The main goal behind school-based professional development, according to the principal, is to meet the needs of teachers as they see them, not as the administration perceives them. While the district retained approval authority for larger expenditures, the initiatives for professional development programming at Central usually stemmed from interests articulated by teachers.

For example, district administrators encouraged all schools to build in five "banking time days" (heretofore referred to as "staff development days") into the school year so that schools, if they chose to participate, could focus on professional development and school improvement activities. On each staff development day a portion of the day was dedicated to a school-wide inservice, and the remainder was left to the teachers' discretion. Central also chose to use some of it's inservice time to run programs favored by teachers, and to present information about the new test required for graduation. The principal felt that the staff development days allowed

everyone a chance to take a breath and focus on collaboration and other issues for which teachers have no time when students are in the building.

Thus, at Central efforts were underway to offer both individual and school-wide professional learning support for teachers changing their practices guided by a specific reform and new organizational structure. In addition to pursuing teacher input on the staff development days, the principal hoped to foster an experimental atmosphere at Central, by encouraging collaboration among teachers and largely letting teachers set their own agendas for professional development. As we examine the accounts of the teachers at this school, however, we see that professional community may be fostered and impeded in highly complex ways that occur outside the context of formal professional development activities.

School Culture

Experimentation and risk taking. Nearly all of the teachers interviewed at Central spoke appreciatively of an atmosphere that fosters innovation and risk taking. These teachers felt as though they could try new activities and approaches with their students so long as the innovation was educationally sound. One computer science teacher remarked that support she received from school leaders to learn and apply new knowledge in her practice is what kept her current in her practice. "We've been very fortunate here that the administration has been very supportive of anything new. " A science teacher echoed this sentiment.

> Well I think from a leadership angle there is a sense of encouragement for experimentation. There isn't a right way of doing things. Another thing, how many billion things have I learned here, but everybody learns in a different way. You've got to address that, so you're going to try to hit different learning styles. So how the school does that, I think that's one thing, is just encouraging experimentation and trying new things.

Collaboration and informal teacher interactions. Teachers stressed how much of their best learning occurs via informal interactions with other teachers. Illustrating the interrelatedness of school climate and formal structure, the teachers at Central felt they learned most from simply talking to other teachers, particularly in their subject areas. The school's move to departmental offices greatly facilitated the teachers' ability to communicate with one another. As one veteran teacher described:

> They eliminated teachers' desks in their rooms. Instead we have a departmental concept. The teachers have all their desks in a room. The teachers didn't like that, but the new ones, they don't know any different. I think that was a great move. I don't even know if they anticipated the benefit, but just by putting the teachers with each other the new teachers are going to push the old teachers with new ideas they've got and the old teachers are going to show the new teachers some of the neat things that do work.

An English teacher participating in one of the School-to-Work families agreed. Citing the school's use of team-building inservices during the move to SBM as an example, she felt that the school had done a good job meeting teachers' needs. She went on to say that Central does a good job of drawing on the experience of teachers in the school. "And so we use the expertise in the building to teach other teachers. And we do have very talented staff here who know a lot of valuable skills and techniques that they can pass on. " This teacher greatly appreciated her ability to team with another teacher in a family group because it allowed them to share ideas and continually improve their practice. Another teacher concurred:

> Well, we have a staff here, we really lean on each other. Although sometimes you can feel isolated being a high school teacher, but we have a lot of common offices where we can share, especially on a Saturday if you're with colleagues you have a lot of sharing that can go on. We meet together as a department at least once a month and we do talk curricular issues.

The teachers at Central experienced a school culture that fostered both risk-taking and collaboration. As a result the teachers believed they had improved their practice. They felt the school supported and enhanced their attempts to make the content relevant for students. This seems to have been true particularly for teachers in the math and science departments, who acknowledged that they struggled in the past to motivate students to engage in course work in which they could see little point. Moreover, the teachers believed they were better able to meet the emotional, affective, and academic needs of their students.

Professional learning. The need to respond to the emotional and academic exigencies facing their students shaped the teachers' perception of their own learning needs. While they found the school culture supportive and conducive to experimentation, the teachers at Central High School also favored learning experiences aimed at giving them practical activities for their classroom. In addition, they valued the opportunity to interact with colleagues, they preferred

learning opportunities centered on issues within their content area, and more importantly, on strategies that were immediately applicable in their classrooms.

When talking with teachers about the development of their own practice, nearly all spoke about the importance of local and regional professional organizations. One math teacher at Central cited his national organization's conferences and state and local organizations as his primary source for professional development. "Well they really keep current, they offer some really good practical things that you could actually use right away in the classroom. It's not like they're loading you down with theory. " This quote is illustrative in that several teachers made a link between the effectiveness of their learning from their professional organizations and gaining practical activities that could be implemented in their classrooms fairly quickly. They tended to believe that conversations about what should be done, should not take place without teachers. As one science teacher put it, " I believe in research for research's sake, but I'm on the front line of what's going on. So I would want to know this is a useful thing. And it wouldn't be like I'm going to take five years to learn this, particularly at this stage in my life.

While the notion of professional communities emphasizes the importance of school-wide reform and the development of a school-wide vision and set of values about schooling, teachers did not overtly describe their work in this way. The teachers at Central appreciated the wide flexibility offered to them by their school's professional development structure. They felt they had administrative support for learning things that were important to their individual or content area learning. In fact, a few teachers thought that many of the school-wide activities were a waste of their time because they were too general. Teachers from the math department, especially, felt as though its needs were so particular that school-wide discussions only side-tracked them from the more important task of finding activities for students to keep them motivated and engaged with the course material. Most of the teachers saw themselves gaining these valuable activities from their peers in professional organizations rather than from school sponsored events. These teachers also spoke about the ways in which teachers could share their newfound knowledge with one another. Other teachers spoke about the importance of different business organizations in the community for providing technology training and opportunities to develop partnerships with the different family groups. Several teachers mentioned that their interactions with these community organizations and parents had helped them learn to teach kids much more effectively.

North High School: A Culture of Confrontation and Rugged Individualism

On its surface, North should have an edge over other schools in the district in terms of creating professional community. It is widely considered to be one of the best high schools in the city. Indeed, it is the college preparatory school in the district, possessing close ties with a large state university. North operated multiple programs ranging from School-to-Work, and programs for underachieving students, to offering a wide range of Advanced Placement and evening adult education courses. In addition, in the year prior to this study the faculty narrowly voted to join the Coalition of Essential Schools. North strikes one as a very busy school.

Since North offered a more rigorous course of study for students than other district high schools, teachers were required to transfer in from other schools based on seniority. In addition, they also needed, with few exceptions, to possess a Masters degree. By and large, the teaching staff at North was older and more experienced than the faculty at other high schools in the district. More importantly they experienced their relationship with their principal and the district administration as highly adversarial.

A primary source of tension in the building revolved around the issue of professional development, i.e., how it will be done, and who will control the process. As we describe below, a significant proportion of the faculty felt like they were being forced into changes with which they disagreed and that neither the district nor the principal offered support for the kinds of learning they deemed worthwhile. Many teachers distrusted the administration, and felt they are being asked to do too much.

The Principal

Leadership against the tide. While she had nine years experience as a principal, at the time of the study she was a fairly recent arrival at North. Her role in this school was much more overt and immediately felt than that of the principal at Central. Perhaps her directive approach to leadership was the result a belief system that barriers to school success were located "out there," i.e., not related to her own leadership style. Instead, her challenge was to overcome the challenges posed by poor faculty attitudes, a belligerent teachers union, lack of resources, and inflexible district and school bureaucracies.

North's principal viewed herself as the person in charge of directing professional development. Ideally, in her view, the department chairs would head up staff development efforts in the content areas, since that is their area of expertise. The principal felt, however, that

the union contract constrained her ability to delegate that authority since department chairs were not allowed to evaluate other teachers' performance. The district neither provided sufficient authority or incentives for department chairs to lead their departments.

> And all of this relates to money. This isn't poor decision-making exactly, okay. Economics runs all of this when [the district] has teachers come in, they get no reimbursement for that day. You must have teacher-pupil interaction for X amount of time in order to get the state to reimburse you.

Frustration characterized this principal's relationship with her faculty throughout her two-year tenure. When the district implemented staff development days in the previous year in order to give the schools more planning time, the principal found herself faced with what she considered a recalcitrant faculty uninterested in reform or curricular change. She liked the fact that the district left the content of each staff development day up to the individual schools, but ran into considerable opposition from her own teachers. She located the difficulty with the unwillingness of her faculty to make room in their day for professional learning.

> This past year they changed it [lengthened the school day] to ten minutes which is what some of the high school principals advocated....Ten minutes then you have five full days. Well the vote came in September. You have teachers who don't want anything to do with staff development. They want to close their door and do their own thing. Well it turned out that staff voted for it. We won. The staff that lost were upset because they thought I came in with other staff to vote for it, especially new teachers. There was a lot of grumbling.

As the above comment suggests, this principal viewed the faculty's decision whether or not to participate in staff development days as a battle to be won or lost. Further, she believed the battle was important enough to campaign for and to accept the decision to participate even though the vote passed by the slimmest of margins. After the arguments of the previous year, the union argued that teachers had to be given half of each staff development day to tend to whatever they felt was necessary. Again the principal felt this was risky because so many of her teachers resist change. She wanted the school to move toward block scheduling and cooperative learning because, in her words, those things make you change your pedagogy, but thought the school as a whole needed a great deal of staff development to make wholesale changes like that work.

While she conceded that teachers need to direct their own development and learning, she expressed little faith that self-direction was what her teachers were after.

> Well you have a lot of people who say I don't want to do that. Because if you have days with no kids here you have to talk about ideas, talk about doing things differently and how to do things better. And that's exactly what you want, but some teachers [believe they] don't need to do anything differently. They've been doing the same thing for so many years and why should they change.

In short, this principal viewed herself as someone struggling against the tide of faculty mediocrity and indifference in the effort to improve her school. Acknowledging that she has a core set of teachers upon which she can draw to help with school improvement efforts, she relied on them to ask teachers what they wanted to do with their staff development days after the tensions of the previous year became manifest. Yet she believed that another core group of teachers sitting in opposition to change of any kind stands in the way of progress at North. In discussing her hopes of implementing block scheduling the principal worried about how she would bring everyone on board in support of the reform. She found the structure of both the district and high schools in general to be culprits in fostering an anti-change disposition among her faculty. Somewhat facetiously she described her perception of the attitudes of some of North's teachers.

> The way that high schools are set up, just by the fact that I can close the door and don't need to communicate with anybody else, I can do my own thing with these kids for fifty minutes. I've never been judged whether my kids know anything by the time they get out of here or not. And on top of it, North is considered to be a pretty good school. So why should I change. Everything's going okay.

School Culture

Nearly all of the teachers at North spoke of the tensions between teachers and the principal/administration, of the lack of trust, and unwillingness to change. Considerable disagreement existed, however, as to why some teachers so strongly opposed changes in the school. The teachers' talk about the situation at North shed considerable light on some of the reasons one would be hard pressed to call the faculty and administration at North a professional community as put forth by Louis et al (1996). They argue that professional community depends largely on the interplay between the structural supports (e.g., the organization of teacher work)

offered by the school and the cultural disposition of the cadre of teachers and administrators, all of which should be focused around improving student learning. At North, however, several factors militated against the successful emergence and nurturing of professional community.

Spread too thin: Lack of structural supports. One of the most prevalent themes emerging from the teacher interviews at North revolved around a general feeling of trying to do too much with insufficient resources. Nearly every teacher interviewed spoke about their tightly packed schedules and feeling as though they could not keep up with their work load. Changing their teaching practice seemed overwhelming. An AP math teacher said that his timetable for changing the curriculum in just one of his courses extended over several school years because of the time involved in creating, testing, and revising new activities.

Several teachers spoke eloquently about the root causes of feeling spread too thin. One teacher located the difficulty in several places. First, he felt the school and particularly the principal tried to implement too many reforms in spite of a shrinking supply of resources. He said that the district had shifted its priorities to the primary and middle grades in order to give kids better foundations before they reached high school, but this meant that teachers at North had more students and less release time than before the policy change. Yet the principal and her assistants kept adding new programs.

> The way I see it North is trying to do too much and sometimes it's spread too thin. We have quite a few programs going on, everything from the HERO in the home ec section for the seventy students and then we have the AP students...and things in between for all the different ability groups and interests that youngsters have. That spreads departments thin. We're connected with the [university] and we send youngsters there during the day. We have a good professional relationship with them. They're sending us student teachers and field workers and holding [graduate] classes in our building during the night, so it makes it easy for our teachers to go to school there. That's the plus side. So often people like to focus on that. But I think only half the building involved in that. Half the building is just a normal high school.

This teacher felt that the building lacked a focus on student learning, that all of the programs were nice, but that they indicated incoherence of purpose. The use, or misuse from his perspective, of the staff development days reflected a similar lack of focus on the overall goal of improving student learning. He believed that after the political problems accompanying the

previous year's vote on staff development days that the principal had loosened up too much. A case in point, he felt that there was undue emphasis placed on the "bells and whistles" of technology at the expense of real discussion about what teachers need in order to help their kids learn the skills they need.

> But the staff development now is too hit and miss. Part of that has to do with the history of how it happened at North....I don't think technology is worth the money we're putting into it. I think the benefit is a little, little extra you get out of it. I would rather see that the money was put on to release those teachers as resources who would go into classrooms and say to anyone, any teacher that took on the challenge and say now I'll come into your classroom and I'll show you another way to get your kids to do whatever, and I'll model.

It is interesting to note, here, that the principal seemed to think she was responding to staff needs as they expressed them at the voting meetings and through the professional development committee. In fact, the tone of her comments about the professional development opportunities reflected resignation rather than a solid belief in the push for technology. The principal seemed to believe that she would have to take whatever level of participation she could get from her faculty, and if she could get them to take on technology then she would settle for that and hope for more later.

Distrust. Two key features mold the cultural landscape of North, neither of which foster the emergence and growth of professional community, and both are in some ways related to the inadequacy of structural supports at the school. Distrust and tension seem to run through the relationships between the principal and the faculty, and between faculty opposed to the recent changes and others who have been more receptive. From the teachers' perspective the recent controversy surrounding the staff development days and the decision to join the Coalition of Essential Schools reflects the administration's lack of interest in teacher needs and desires. As one English teacher put it, many faculty thought that the second vote to approve the staff development days was rigged by the principal so she would get the outcome she wanted. She said that many of the teachers at North oppose anything handed down by the administration simply because they dislike feeling left out and mandated. In talking about the upcoming discussions about block scheduling she said, "Everything has to be worded so carefully so as not to offend, not to break trust. It's just so delicate, it's ridiculous. I'm at a real loss and these last

couple of weeks I've been really struggling with this. How can I pull a load that heavy. " She felt increasingly isolated because she is considered to be one of the teachers who is part of the principal's crowd.

> There is a perception on the part of teachers that [the principal] will work with teachers she knows are going to work. Then those people get a really bad reputation. That's the secret group. They have control of everything....I'm in that group.

Another teacher felt the same way. He said that the discontent caused by the perceived lack of responsiveness on the part of the principal raised all sorts of issues about democracy and ownership of activities in the school, leaving a rift that would not soon be mended. He and other teachers felt that some teachers in the school would never vote for a change again if the idea were thought to come from the administration. This teacher thought some of the distrust stemmed from the fact that the teaching staff was older and more experienced than at most high schools. He thought that people were more set in their ways and adverse to change than they would be at a school where there were a fair number of new teachers to push the old ideas.

Isolation. Reinforcing the widespread feeling of distrust runs an undercurrent of isolationism among the teachers. Isolation seemed to take on two dimensions: an self imposed isolation from school administrators and isolation from peers so often associated with the cultures of large comprehensive high schools. Thus, although they decried the lack of opportunities for interaction with their peers, many teachers said they wanted the administration to leave them alone, that they knew best what they needed in the way of professional learning. They wanted as little input from the principal and the central administration as possible. Indeed, several teachers seemed to take offense at the idea that someone other than themselves could criticize their teaching practices and make suggestions. One veteran history teacher argued that she basically taught the way she had been taught herself and that this worked just fine for her. She saw no reason to completely reevaluate her practice. She said that she knew how to find things that she wanted to do in her classroom, and that if she wanted to experiment then the she did it should be left up to her. While she favors learning opportunities where she can interact with other teachers she opposed overt intervention by the administration. When speaking about the previous year's controversy she said,

> Eventually we got to the second go around and she (the principal) understood at that point that teachers didn't like it because it was run by the administration. It was their

> agenda, not the teachers'. …It's not professional development, it's accomplishing what the principal needs done to turn into [the district] them.

The AP math teacher stated his aversion to the administration more forcefully, reflecting the idea held by a number of teachers at North that pedagogy is more of a personality trait than a learned and intentional skill.

> I see central office as administrative assistants to the teachers. I see the principal and assistant principal, their job *should be* administrative assistants to the teachers. They should be there for one purpose, to facilitate good teaching. *To facilitate good teaching.* Not to be our bosses, not to be hassling us. Not to be telling us how we should be teaching because most of them are out of touch.

He felt that the administration got in his way more often than not, and that they should not be trying to force teachers to change their style of teaching. He cited cooperative learning as one example. He thought that most teachers knew how they taught best and that to impose one style on teachers was asking for disaster because some people's personalities simply do not lend themselves to cooperative learning, or to lecture for that matter. The decision, however, was best left up to the teacher.

In addition to their pervasive antipathy towards the administration, the teachers at North felt isolated from one another, and unable to find ways to communicate about their teaching with others in the building. Several teachers remarked that they had yet to meet or see all of the teachers through the end of the first quarter. One math teacher expressed his inability to really talk with teachers about his practice in the following way.

> The profession in some ways is really damned. There is no way that I can just pop next door and say hey how do you do this? I'm isolated up here. I'm in here all day long. I'm back here in my room usually until four or five o'clock and I don't see anybody. I'm isolated. The fact that I'm not teaching the same courses as [another math teacher] this year, I'm even more isolated. I don't see anybody.

This teacher was frustrated, as were other math teachers, that their rooms were spread out all over the building. They had no common place to get together and talk about their teaching. Even informal communication was difficult because of the lack of departmental structure. He and others spoke of the need for greater interaction with other teachers, particularly within the content areas. They felt that the best learning occurred during informal interactions with other

teachers, during situations in which they could bounce ideas for activities and strategies off one another.

Several teachers spoke of the need to have more release time in order to watch other teachers work. They wanted to be able to see examples of new practices exhibited by teachers successful at implementing them in their classrooms, so that they could better understand how to do it themselves. One Algebra teacher said that she prefers learning activities where she has time to practice a new idea and talk about with other teachers, but she hadn't really seen any exciting professional development opportunities at North. A history teacher expressed her frustration in the following way.

> I do believe that sharing with my peers is very important. other teachers have insights that can be equally valid as what you find in a book or classroom. I would like to see more of learning that way. I think teachers have a lot of successful techniques but we don't have time to observe it, share it, talk about it. I don't know how you get that time in the day to do that.

She felt that it would cost too much money to pay for all the substitute teachers and be too difficult to get teachers to give up their scarce release time to go watch other teachers, or to cover for them.

In this way the teachers at North have been unable to engage in activities resembling the deprivatization of practice discussed by Louis et al. (1996). Teachers find they are unable to share their practices with one another, even though on some levels they would like to. One English teacher pointed to the isolationism of the teaching staff as one cause of the failure to sustain cooperative learning over time. At one time seventy-five percent of the staff had training in cooperative learning within three years, however, the number of people using the strategy and the number of people talking about it had declined precipitously. "People in this building don't know what other people are doing....There was no follow-up. So even though everyone had that training, there was no accountability for it. " She felt that the school had really been engaged to accomplish some meaningful change and it fell by the wayside because of the lack of institutional supports to foster continued dialogue and reflection on practice.

Discussion

Our findings section served three primary purposes. In it we provided the reader with (a) an overview of the district and school settings, (b) data that enables us to assess the degree to

which professional community existed at each school, and (c) evidence with which to assess the role of the principal in establishing professional community. While direct comparisons of the two schools is unfair given their unique contexts (e.g., school mission or faculty culture), in our discussion we can compare each school to the principles of professional community. Second, we reflect upon the role of each principal in fostering or impeding the cultivation professional community-like organizations. Finally, we consider the strengths and shortcomings of professional community as a concept and reflect upon its utility as a guide for thinking about the purpose and organization of teacher work and the relationship between principals and faculty.

Central High School and Professional Community

The culture at Central as described by teachers and the principal, and corroborated in observations, reflects several dimensions of professional community. Specifically, three categories relevant to the concept of professional community emerged: (1) principal and faculty conceptions of student learning; (2) the organization of and control over teacher work; and (3) teachers conceptions of themselves as professional learners.

In several important ways, student learning was the driver of professional activity at Central. Teachers clearly shared a common definition and language to describe student learning and all it encompassed. For example, teachers we interviewed had internalized their understanding of student learning as evidenced by their ability to articulate exactly what was meant by such phrases as "all students can learn." Specifically, student learning was defined more broadly than "student achievement" as described in the model of professional community used in this study. Rather, these teachers believed that other facets of student learning were equally important and should be given equal priority. Teachers' comments suggested that they took a scaffolding approach to student learning. For example, teachers placed a high priority on establishing a physically and emotionally safe environment. Thus, with administrative support, teachers spent a great deal of time incorporating peer mediation into the school curriculum to teach students peaceful and constructive means of conflict resolution. Once this foundation was in place teachers concerned themselves with helping students make connections between the subject matter and students' social realities. Ultimately, teachers believed that their role in student learning was to help students see how knowledge was a vehicle through which to develop skills (e.g., interpersonal, technical) and goals related to future careers and education. Thus, these teachers defined student learning in ways that addressed the needs of the whole

student, including the need for physical safety and emotional well-being, and cognitive development.

The organization of teacher work at Central also reflected some of the principles embodied in professional community. Organizationally, teacher work was deprivatized through subtle and not so subtle changes in the structure of teacher work. As Schein (1992) observed a simple change in physical layout of work space compelled teachers to spend more time together. While the change was not initially welcomed by some teachers, over time they began to use this "intellectual space" as a place where norms, values, and beliefs were reshaped in ways supportive of professional community. For example, the change in physical structure supported other changes in pedagogy and curriculum as the school moved incrementally to a "family" structure that required collaboration on the development of interdisciplinary curriculum to be delivered by teacher teams.

Teachers' approach to their own learning was also a critical element of professional community at Central. Teachers thought of their own learning on two levels: an individual level and a school/organizational level. Thus, while teachers described professional learning in ways that reflected some of principles of professional community described in this study, they also reminded us of the importance of individual intellectual freedom that teachers, as professionals, seek. In this light, we found that teachers—albeit in an environment strongly resembling professional community—sought multiple avenues to professional learning. For example, reminiscent of professional community as described by Louis et al. Central teachers were encouraged to take risks, be innovative, and then share newfound knowledge with peers. As a result, it was deeply engrained into the school's culture that local knowledge (disseminated during staff development days) was valuable due to its source, its contextual relevance, and immediate usefulness. However, in addition to their commitment to learning as a community of professionals, these teachers described their eagerness to broaden themselves as individual professionals by joining and attending professional associations and workshops. Through these events teachers were able to achieve several goals as individual professionals. For example, these outlets allowed teachers to deprivatize their practice beyond the school walls and tap into a much wider, different, and perhaps at times deeper source of knowledge. In an important way, then, the saliency of identity that heretofore emerged as indicative of professional community as collective identity (Louis, et al.) exemplified more of a shared identity, as there were "common

elements in the way in which... *individuals* identify themselves" (Yack, 1993). Finally, by learning in an environment apart from the school teachers were able to rejuvenate themselves by taking the time to reflect upon the significance and implications of newly acquired knowledge for practice.

North High School and Professional Community

Clearly, the situation at North High School did not reflect the principles of professional community. In spite of a plethora of district and school level reforms that espoused the principles of professional community, teachers did not (or could not) share with us a common understanding of student learning, or a commitment to the broader school community. In short, our study of North High surfaced several interesting challenges and dilemmas that threatened and impeded the formation of professional community. Challenges included a faculty culture that placed a premium on individual subject matter expertise, an administration that lead through coalition, administration-faculty relations characterized by mistrust, and poor structural and organizational supports to assist teachers in dealing with the stress that accompanies instructional change. The major dilemma we discovered was the ongoing tension between the faculty and its desire for professional autonomy and the principal's efforts to improve the school at an organizational level.

Like all schools in this urban district, these two high schools were required to adopt a theme around which teaching and learning activities were guided. Thus, it was surprising to find that professional community was not evident at a school where the organizing theme was "college prep," where teachers were required to have at a minimum a master's degree, and in which the school had a districtwide reputation for innovation and positive climate. Rather, what was evident was that administrator-faculty relations were strained and the faculty culture was grounded in the assumption that one's individual expertise and knowledge were sacrosanct.

The strain evident between the school's principal and most of the faculty with whom we spoke, centered on the struggle over who controls teacher work and learning—administration or faculty. For instance, this struggle for control was manifested in debates over if, when, and how to implement block scheduling. Furthermore, reform and school improvement efforts such as Coalition of Essential Schools, School to Work, and block scheduling left teachers feeling bewildered and stressed as they struggled to make sense of the implications of these reforms for their own practice. In short, teachers believed that these changes were inevitable and would be

imposed upon them. As a result, an atmosphere of distrust was fostered that was not conducive to the establishment of norms of collaboration, a group or organizational conversation around issues of student learning, or reflective dialogue. Instead, the focus of teacher discussions during "collaborative" meetings was to discuss issues related to a perceived lack of resources, internal politics, problem students, and so on.

Beyond administration-faculty relations, North High School was a case study of how deeply ingrained faculty cultures can stifle the cultivation of professional community. In this case, strong norms of intellectualism, independence based on expertise, and the sanctity of ones own discipline acted as impediments to professional community. While faculty characteristics such as these are not surprising to educators and researchers at all familiar with high school teachers, at North the intransigence of these norms were more deeply rooted as a result of requirements for graduate degrees and the school's thematic focus.

The Principals' Role in Fostering Professional Community

The two case studies leave little doubt as to the divergent styles of the two principals. Less clear is the direction of causality regarding the principals' role in fostering the characteristics of professional communities. In other words, who or what had more influence on encouraging or impeding the formation of these communities, principals or the existing faculty cultures? While this question is difficult to answer definitively, our fieldwork in the two schools led us to develop educated opinions as to the nature of relations between the principals and faculty and the implications for professional community.

School culture at Central High School approached the standards of professional community to a greater degree than North. Somewhat paradoxically, while Central teachers articulated a broad and complete definition of student learning and collaborated in ways that supported their beliefs of student needs, teachers rarely mentioned the principal's role in the development of such a culture. In fact, the principal appeared to support and encourage professional community in important yet understated ways. For example, school administration worked with non-certified staff and teachers to develop a safe environment in which teaching and learning could take place. Thus, through a constant visible presence of adults throughout the school and the development of a meditation program that was well publicized and required of students who broke school rules and norms, the school provided a climate in which teachers could concentrate on the tasks of teaching and learning.

Second, at faculty meetings and staff development inservices the principal was observed consistently protecting the school's purpose and vision by deflecting or absorbing district policies, programs, and reforms in ways that made sense for Central High School. It was this type of leadership that built a high degree of trust between faculty and administration. This trust was further exhibited by the principal's willingness to allow teachers to develop, design and carry out their own agendas for staff development. In short, administration and faculty at Central High School were able to achieve a balance between individual teacher needs and school level needs. In effect, teachers were allowed to follow their intellectual curiosity and passion in ways that addressed school goals, too.

Although the principal's role at North was starkly different, so too was the culture of North faculty. Both leadership style and the basic underlying assumptions (Schein, 1992) governing the nature of teacher and principal work presented difficult obstacles that impeded the establishment of professional community. The North principal appeared to be caught in a Catch-22. On the one hand, the principal saw areas that needed to be changed and improved in the school; but on the other hand, her highly experienced and educated staff was resistant to change and intolerant of "intrusions" into the classroom by administration. This attitudinal artifact was a reflection of an assumption that North teachers were experts in their fields as evidenced by their advanced degrees, and therefore knowledge and learning were primarily acts initiated at an individual's discretion. Administrator "intrusions" into the classroom were seen as threats to this fundamental assumptions.

In spite of these challenges, in several important ways the principal's leadership style was contradictory to the principles of professional community. For instance, her leadership style tended to be directive and transactional. Her actions suggested a perception of power as a limited resource that was shared with a small coalition of teachers—an approach that left most teachers feeling left "out of the loop" on important decisions. For example, decisions regarding whether to adopt staff development days or block scheduling passed by the slimmest of faculty margins and gave the impression of "electoral fraud" on the part of the principal. Decisions important to the principal were seen as "done deals" by a significant number of faculty. Finally, another critical element of the principal's approach to leadership was her view of formal professional development. In spite of rhetoric to the contrary, her actions belied a philosophy that the content of school based professional development was a management decision. As a

result, teachers never had ownership of the staff development content. Their lack of "buy-in" to formal professional development further distanced them from characteristics of professional community such as deprivatization of practice or meaningful group discussions about student learning and achievement.

Conceptual Reconsideration

As the concept of professional community continues to grow as an important component of promising school reform, this study both (1) underscores the import of the current conception (especially as its presence does facilitate authentic learning), and (2) expands the current conception by attending to the limitations of the current conception (especially as these limitations emerged in the data). Accordingly, there are important implications regarding theory development, practice, and future research.

Professional Community and Identity

The experiences and senses of identity that pertain to teachers and principals are myriad and typically not represented in policy (Lieberman, 1982). When it comes to professional identity (especially as professional identity has come to obtain in the professional community literature) in particular, and community identity in general, there arguably has been a failure to elucidate the distinction between communion (i.e., collective identity) and community (i.e., shared identity) (Yack, 1993). To clarify this distinction, it is helpful to turn to one of the first accounts of community in the Western tradition, that being Aristotle's treatment of said concept.

Rather than beginning with the above (or similar) dichotomy of community (as does Durkheim, Weber, and Tonnies, as well as other modern social theorists), Aristotle, in the beginning of his politics, introduces the concept of community in a much broader sense: Accordingly he asserts that "every polis is some sort of community [*koimonia*]" (Politics, 1252a1), categorizing the polis as a kind, or category, of community (Yack, 1993). According to Yack,

> Aristotle differs from most modern social theorists in that he treats community as a generic rather than a specific social category. He uses it to characterize *all* social groups rather than to characterize one especially close and highly integrated form of social life (Yack, p. 26).

Accordingly, community concerns the interaction of individuals; as individuals enter into relation with others (e.g., business contracts, family relations, political groups, teachers and

principal in school), they do so as individuals participating in a *koimonia*. It is important to note how this contrasts with many contemporary uses of the term community, many (arguably most) of which posit something similar to Tonnies *Gemeinschaft* and Louis' et al. (1996) emphasis of the collective over the individual. The intent here is not to contend that these uses do not attend to the individual within the community, but rather that the emphasis is primarily on the collective, often to the devaluation of the individual. Thus we are suggesting that the notion of professional community be recast in terms of shared identity rather than collective identity. In other words, rather than considering members of a community (say, a professional school community) in terms of "we-ness," community members would see themselves both as "we" and as "I."

The emphasis of the individual who then participates in community is underscored by what Aristotle identifies as four primary elements of community. As elucidated by Yack, these elements are the following:

> (1) A community consists of individuals who differ from each other in some significant way. (2) These individuals share something: some good, activity, feature of their identity, or any combination thereof. (3) They engage in some interaction related to what they share. (4) (And)... they are bound to each other, to a greater or lesser extent, by some sense of friendship (*philia*) and some sense of justice (Yack, p. 29).

As is clearly stated in the first element, and then at the least implied by the other three, communities are composed of different individuals. Rather than reducing, or even precluding, a sense of autonomy or agency on behalf of individuals in community, Aristotle's community advances these. Accordingly, the shared identity to which the second element points, "refers to common elements in the way in which a group of individuals identify themselves," rather than "the association of one's own identity with a collective will" (Yack, p. 31). The truth of this is arguably born out in the fact that most of us who participate/exist in communities nonetheless retain a strong sense of individuality (and even individuated agency). This may simply be due to the community shaping our individual identity in the first place.

Although the elucidation and scrutiny of this distinction might appear to be solely academic and have no real implications for what goes on with the everyday lives of teachers and principals, the presence of individuation and agency that emerged from the experiences of the

staff at Central suggests otherwise. For instance, rather than emphasizing "collective processes," "collective responsibility," and "collective focus," over those that are individual, an Aristotelian (and Central High School) approach would arguably go between the horns of the dichotomy and emphasize balancing the individual with the community, as she (the teacher) works toward increasing her content and pedagogical knowledge as individual and with others, and as she as individual encourages others to do such. The role of encourager/facilitator is especially pertinent regarding leadership; through an "equitable exercise of power and influence," (Louis et al., 1996), principals can nurture a shared identity among teachers, as was demonstrated at Central High School. Accordingly, administrating, teaching, and learning, is attended from both ends: as individual professionals and as professionals within a community, for to be a professional in a community is to first be an individual with agency.

Summary

Cartesian ontology has had profound and important implications for education. In particular, this machine model moved educational communities toward a culture and structure that was centralized, hierarchical, specialized, and aimed at efficient dissemination of knowledge (Morgan, 1997; Whitehead, 1925). Rather than generating leadership and management strategies from within the school culture, school leaders imported these from the business community, which in turn had been heavily influenced by the objectivism of scientific management at the turn of the century and on into the 1900s (Sergiovanni, 1994; Morgan). Accordingly, teacher learning and professionalism in this context reflected the bureaucratic structure, emphasizing individualism, isolation, and hierarchy. Recent research suggests, however, that these models, or metaphors, for school communities and structures at best limit and at worst preclude authentic learning and pedagogy, and calls for leadership that facilitates moving away from scientific management and toward professional community (Louis, Marks, &Kruse, 1996). This study affirms this move, while at the same time encourages the reconsideration of the proposed professional community model, ultimately arguing for a conception of community that reintroduces individualism and autonomy to collaboration and collegiality through the means of shared (rather than collective) identity.

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